

CE.I All families have access to a Service Coordinator that facilitates ongoing, timely early intervention services in natural environments.**1. Baseline/Trend Data and Analysis (for reporting period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004):**

In Missouri, intake coordinators provide service coordination to every family from referral through the development of the initial IFSP. Intake coordinators are employed by System Points of Entry (SPOEs) that cover regions of the state, made up of one or more counties. Service coordination responsibilities are then transferred to an ongoing service coordinator after the initial IFSP meeting. Since July 2004, in Phase 1 SPOEs, ongoing service coordinators are also employed by the SPOEs or are service coordinators for the Department of Mental Health (DMH). In Phase 2, the ongoing service coordinators are either independent or are service coordinators for DMH.

The 2002-03 APR indicated that there were 25 children without a service coordinator or an authorization for service coordination in the data system. These were found to be data entry omissions, and SPOEs have been contacted to update service coordinator data as needed. There is no indication that there are currently any children who do not have a service coordinator.

In defining Missouri's system of general supervision, the following service coordination requirements, indicators and mechanisms for monitoring were outlined:

Federal Regulations Require:

- Assist parents of eligible children in gaining access to the early intervention (EI) services and other services identified in the IFSP.
- Coordinate the provision of EI services and other services (such as medical services for other than diagnostic and evaluation purposes) that the child needs or is being provided.
- Facilitate the timely delivery of available services
- Seek the appropriate services and situations necessary to benefit the development of each child being served for the duration of the child's eligibility.

Specific service coordination activities listed in Regulations:

- Coordinate the performance of evaluations and assessments
- Facilitate and participate in the development, review, and evaluation of IFSPs
- Assist families in identifying available service providers
- Coordinate and monitor the delivery of available services
- Inform families of the availability of advocacy services
- Coordinate with medical and health providers
- Facilitate the development of a transition plan to preschool services, if appropriate

Compliance indicators related to ongoing Service Coordinators:

- Parental consent for exchange of personally identifiable information
- Prior written notice and consent
- Written notification of IFSP meetings
- IFSP content
- Transition planning
- Timely IFSP meetings

Mechanisms in place for Service Coordinator monitoring/oversight:

- In place during 2003-04
 - Child complaint and due process system
 - Credential requirements for enrollment
 - Parent survey
 - Provider agreements require adherence to state and federal statute and regulations
- Implemented during 2004-05
 - Informal issues system – including billing complaints
 - New SPOE contracts include additional responsibilities for ongoing service coordination, including standards for quality IFSPs
 - Regularly scheduled reviews of pertinent data reports
 - Monitor compliance indicators for Intake as well as ongoing Service Coordinators (SPOE and DMH) in February/March 2005 (in Phase 1, Regions 2 and 4) and in summer 2005 (in Region 1). Independent and DMH ongoing service coordinators will be monitored in conjunction with Phase 2 follow-up monitoring in summer 2005. Corrective actions for non-compliance will be required.
 - SPOEs are required to report reasons for exceeding 45 day timelines on a monthly basis. First Steps Regional Consultants and on-site monitoring visits are verifying the accuracy of these reports and ensuring the provision of compensatory services as appropriate.
- To be implemented during 2005-06
 - New webSPOE will keep service coordinators and SPOE administrators aware of upcoming timelines and meeting due dates, as well as documentation of consents
 - IFSP Quality Indicators Review – pilot for Phase 1 SPOEs will address service coordination expectations that fall under quality measures as opposed to compliance indicators

From April 2004 First Steps Family Survey

Q5: It was easy to learn about First Steps, to find out if my child was eligible for services, and to obtain the early intervention services that are needed for my child and family.

	#	%	State Total	by SPOE: St. Louis (Reg. #2)	by SPOE: SE MO (Reg. #7, 21, 23)	All Other SPOEs
Strongly Agree	455	33.07%	83.07%	75.71%	80.00%	86.00%
Agree	688	50.00%				
Disagree	170	12.35%	16.93%	24.29%	20.00%	14.00%
Strongly Disagree	63	4.58%				
Total	1376			N=354	N=65	N=957

Q11: Our family routinely uses the help of our service coordinator.

	#	%	State Total	by SPOE: Jeff. City (Reg. #16)	by SPOE: St. Joseph (Reg. #5)	by SPOE: Sedalia (Reg. #10)	by SPOE: St. Louis (Reg. #2)	By SPOE: St. Charles (Reg. #1)	All Other SPOEs
Strongly Agree	306	23.78%	74.67%	63.33%	67.65%	68.00%	70.78%	73.55%	77.58%
Agree	655	50.89%							
Disagree	275	21.37%	25.33%	36.67%	32.35%	32.00%	29.22%	26.45%	22.42%
Strongly Disagree	51	3.96%							
Total	1287			N=30	N=34	N=25	N=332	N=121	N=745

Q12: Our service coordinator helps my family, in a timely way, get the services we need.

	#	%	State Total	by SPOE: S. Cen MO (Reg. #18,22)	by SPOE: St. Joseph (Reg. #5)	All Other SPOEs
Strongly Agree	576	44.00%	90.45%	83.33%	85.29%	90.66%
Agree	608	46.45%				
Disagree	91	6.95%	9.55%	16.67%	14.71%	9.34%
Strongly Disagree	34	2.60%				
Total	1309			N=12	N=34	N=1263

The largest number of surveys indicating disagreement for Question 11: "Our family routinely uses the help of our service coordinator," were seen in the St. Louis and St. Charles SPOE regions. Both of these SPOEs are now under a new contract which makes the SPOE responsible for intake and ongoing service coordination. Preliminary results of the new contract indicate that service coordination is more consistent under this new contract.

Child Complaints

Of the eleven child complaints filed during 2003-04, there were seven allegations found out of compliance. Three involved the SPOEs not meeting the 45 day timelines for evaluation and the initial IFSP meeting. All of these were from the St. Louis SPOE which has since been awarded to a new contractor. Three allegations involved failure to implement the IFSP and one involved not meeting transition requirements.

Future Plans for Data Collection

- Informal issues collection
- webSPOE system will enforce timelines for evaluation and six month and annual reviews
- Data from monitoring of service coordinators beginning February/March 2005

2. Targets (for reporting period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004):

- All families have access to a Service Coordinator that facilitates ongoing, timely early intervention services in natural environments.

3. Explanation of Progress or Slippage (for reporting period July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004):

The new Phase 1 SPOE contract, implemented July 2004, significantly impacts the role of service coordinators in the First Steps system. The function of independent service coordination was pulled in under the SPOEs in Phase 1, essentially making the SPOEs responsible for all aspects of the system. The new web-based software which will be implemented in Summer 2005 is very compliance-driven and will require certain actions to be taken and certain forms to be completed. The majority of evaluation/assessment, eligibility determination and IFSP data will be instantly available to DESE for monitoring and program evaluation purposes.

DESE is holding quarterly meetings with SPOE directors and staff to discuss issues. The Phase 1 SPOEs are holding meetings for SPOE and DMH service coordinators in their regions. First Steps consultants are holding provider and service coordinator meetings. A listserv is utilized to communicate with service coordinators and providers on a regular and as-needed basis

See below for a summary of independent service coordination issues that are addressed by the new Phase 1 SPOE contract.

Independent Service Coordination Issues Addressed by Phase 1 SPOE RFP implemented July 2004

Concerns with Original Implementation:	Changes in Contract for Phase 1 SPOEs (In place July 2004):	Results of New Contract
1. Lack of supervision and accountability	Establishes an employer/employee relationship between the SPOE and the service coordinators. This relationship allows for the necessary oversight of their work (i.e., timely completion of required paperwork) and creates accountability for expected job performance.	SPOEs say that it has been very successful to have the service coordinators employed with the SPOE. Consistency among SPOE service coordinators is a major benefit. Oversight and accountability of the employed service coordinators has greatly increased. There is enhanced reporting to the State of timely work with families and corrective actions for non-compliance issues are spread to all service coordinators immediately
2. Lack of support – no place to obtain support when challenged by parents or providers to include services in the IFSP that the service coordinator believed to be inappropriate for First Steps	By placing the service coordinators under the direct supervision of the SPOE, they will have a network of support to assist them as they explain the First Steps program requirements and limitations to parents and providers.	SPOEs say that it has been helpful for the service coordinators to have administration and a team approach to service coordination in place for support when explaining First Steps philosophy. Consistent teaming support at SPOE yields consistency with families as well as fiscal responsibility. Peer reviewers provide oversight of professional opinion for services and the FS philosophy is emphasized and enhanced with providers.

Concerns with Original Implementation:	Changes in Contract for Phase 1 SPOEs (In place July 2004):	Results of New Contract
3. Lack of consistency across the state	SPOEs directing the process from referral to exiting First Steps at age three will provide a consistent compliant approach to the program. The lead agency will have the ability to provide hands-on assistance and supervision to the SPOEs, resulting in more direct control of the administration aspects of the program.	Technical assistance provided by DESE and First Steps consultants now impacts both intake and ongoing service coordinators for the entire region. SPOEs feel that a support system has been put in place for SPOEs, providers and families. Consistency is crucial in providing this program across the state. Consultants facilitate SPOE consistency with State requirements across regions.
4. Authorizations for services not entered in a timely manner in order for providers to begin services and bill for those services.	SPOE supervision of service coordination will eliminate this concern for SPOE supervised service coordinators. All authorizations for this group of service coordinators will be generated at the SPOE and entered at the SPOE. This leaves only DMH service coordinators for the SPOE to track regarding authorizations entered, however, with the new webSPOE software, the DMH service coordinators will be responsible for the data entry for the authorizations rather than having to send paperwork to the SPOEs for data entry.	Paperwork is expected and turned into the SPOE in a timely manner from SPOE employees. This has greatly decreased the amount of frustrated providers as their authorizations have been entered in a timely manner. Staffing patterns in regions have enabled timely service delivery and data entry for SPOE and DMH service coordinators.
5. SPOE offices have difficulty obtaining the necessary paper documentation required for the child's file.	All paperwork will take place within the SPOE operation and eliminate the need to track a group of independent service coordinators across the region. DMH will be the only outside source for the necessary documents.	Paperwork is expected and turned into the SPOE in a timely manner from SPOE employees. Increased collaboration with DMH has enabled compliant documentation of service delivery.
6. Failure to complete required training	Completion of required training by service coordinators will be easier to monitor with the employee relationship that the new RFP provides. Training is a critical component for consistency and compliance within the system. Tracking and enforcing training requirements has been difficult to manage under the current system. Modifications at the CFO will provide this tracking.	SPOE employees must have all the required training modules prior to being hired. Peer reviewers were required to have all training completed prior to application to be on peer review teams in Region 1. In addition, training is occurring on a regular basis for SPOE employees by SPOE administration. Future training will continue to be provided by the SPOE as well as DESE and the First Steps Regional Consultants.

Concerns with Original Implementation:	Changes in Contract for Phase 1 SPOEs (In place July 2004):	Results of New Contract
7. Costs of service coordination – current system inefficient and lacks control of expenses	Cost for this service will be absorbed in the salary of the employed staff at the SPOE. This will eliminate flat rate charges to the system per child each month regardless of the amount of work completed by the service coordinator for that child/family during that month. It will also create uniform caseloads for service coordinators that will enable more consistent service delivery to the families. Under the current system, service coordinators have the incentive to develop large caseloads in order to increase their income but the system provides no checks to ensure that services to families meet the expectation of the program.	SPOE service coordinators are able to keep their caseloads at a reasonable level. SPOE employees are providing 60% of service coordination and the regional centers are providing approximately 40% of services. Children who appear to have potential life-long needs are being referred to the regional center since they may continue service coordination past three. Efficiencies are being seen due to better consistency in screening calls and accepting appropriate referrals. AT oversight and guidance have reduced costs and inappropriate services.

Based on all of the above information, DESE believes that

- Indicators of effective service coordination have been identified for monitoring purposes
- Mechanisms for monitoring/oversight of service coordination have been in place for some time, and additional pieces will be in place by the end of 2004-05
- The new Phase 1 SPOE contract makes many improvements in service coordination compared to the original independent system
- Regular communications between and among DESE, DMH, SPOEs, service coordinators and providers is improving the system
- While some personnel and indicators will be out of compliance, DESE has a system of general supervision that will identify and correct noncompliance

4. Projected Targets:

- All families have a Service Coordinator
- At least 90% of families will agree/strongly agree with survey questions regarding service coordination
- A system for monitoring ongoing service coordinators will be implemented in Spring 2005
- Additional projected targets are in the Future Activities tables.

5 & 6. Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets/Results and Projected Timelines and Resources:

See also GS.I and CBT

Cluster/ Probe	Future Activities to Achieve Projected Targets (5)	Projected Targets/ Evidence of Change (4)	Projected Timelines (6)	Resources (6)
CE.I CE.II CE.III CE.IV	Revise service coordination module	Service coordination activities in compliance	2004-05	EP
CE.I CE.II CE.IV	Develop and distribute guidance documents: Group vs. individual services, Eligibility, Release of Information	Service coordination activities in compliance	2004-05	EP, Funds, Comp, Consultants
CE.I	Develop service coordinator and provider surveys to assess training and technical assistance provided by DESE	Revisions made as necessary	2004-05	EP, Comp, Data
CE.I GS.I GS.II	Review data reports regarding service coordination responsibilities	Service Coordination activities in compliance, timely evaluation/ assessment and IFSP services	Ongoing	Comp, EP, Data, Consultants
CE.I	Finalize and implement system for monitoring service coordination	Service coordination monitored, noncompliance identified and corrected	Ongoing	Comp, Data
CE.I	Finalize new webSPOE system	webSPOE completed, all service coordinators trained in use	Spring/Summer 2005	CFO, Comp, Data, Funds